REM84.「The Lonely Hedgehog」

牛木義隆

WE'RE NOT PLAYING AROUND HERE!
GO OVER THERE SO YOU DON'T GET HURT-
AND YOU CAN BE THE MONSTER!!
SO WHAT'S THIS LUCID THINGY SUPPOSED TO BE?
IS IT STRONGER THAN GURICCHO?
I KNOW! LET'S JUST PLAY GURICCHO INSTEAD!
YOU CAN BE TAROU!
RAWR, I'M A MONSTER FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION!
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY WITH JUST A SPRAIN THIS TIME, GURICCHO!
OH CRAP, RUN!!
"MIXED" AS OUR WORLDS MAY BE,
THE INFLUENCE OF "DREAMS" IS NOT YET STRONG HERE
I REALIZE IT MAY BE DIFFICULT,
BUT DRAW OUT YOUR POWER BY FOCUSING ON THE SENSATION YOU GET FROM USING IT
SOUNDS ABOUT AS EASY AS PICKING UP A CELL SIGNAL IN MY HEAD.

...I'VE BEEN TRYING TO DO IT THE SAME WAY I'VE ALWAYS DONE IT, THOUGH
SO IT'S A MATTER OF MY OWN MINDSET, THEN?
THE MOST OBVIOUS WAY TO PICTURE IT, IS THAT THE POWER ITSELF IS ALREADY THERE, IN YOUR HANDS.
USING OUR POWERS WORKS THE SAME WAY AS IT DOES IN A DAYDREAM...
ヒュッ
WHATEVER YOU DID IN THE DAY-DREAMS, YOU CAN STILL DO HERE-NYA.
CLUMSY BOY-NYA.

IT'S LIKE RIDING A BIKE.
PULL IT OFF ONCE, AND YOU WON'T EASILY FORGET HOW TO DO IT.
THE BOSS AND THE REST OF US COULD DO IT RIGHT AWAY-NYA.
FORGET,
HUH ..
IT'S POSSIBLE THAT THERE'S SOME OTHER REASON
THAT YOU TWO ARE UNABLE TO DRAW OUT YOUR POWERS HERE

SO THE POWER OF DREAMS IS ALSO THE POWER OF THOUGHT?
DOES THAT MEAN OUR OWN FRACTURED MEMORIES
ARE THE REASON WHY WE CAN'T GIVE OUR THOUGHTS FORM?

I BELIEVE THAT TO BE THE CASE.

I FIRST FIGURED OUT HOW TO USE MY KEYS WHEN I REMEMBERED THAT I WAS THE "GATE-KEEPER."
SO NOW I HAVE TO RE-LEARN IT...?

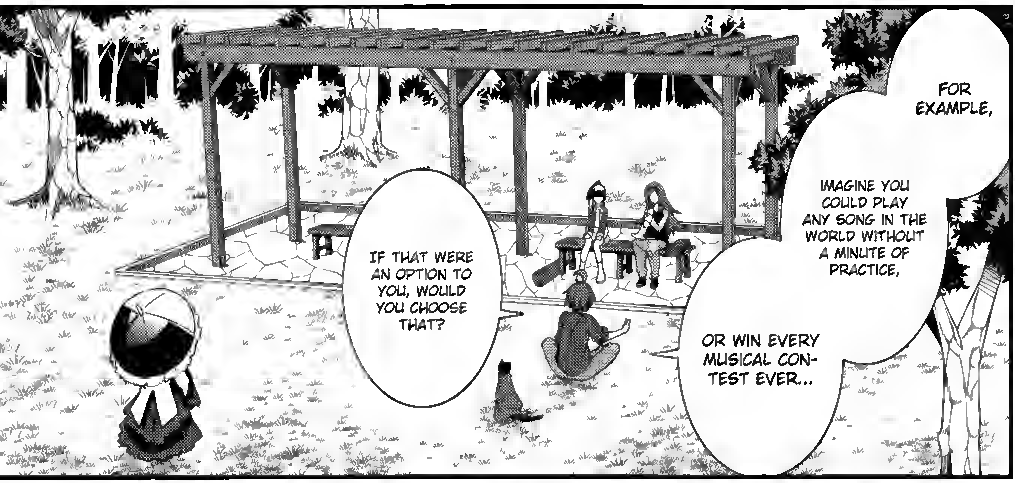
I CAN'T DO A THING UNTIL MY MEMORIES ARE BACK!
IN THE END,
KYOU WAS RIGHT ABOUT IT ALL ALONG!

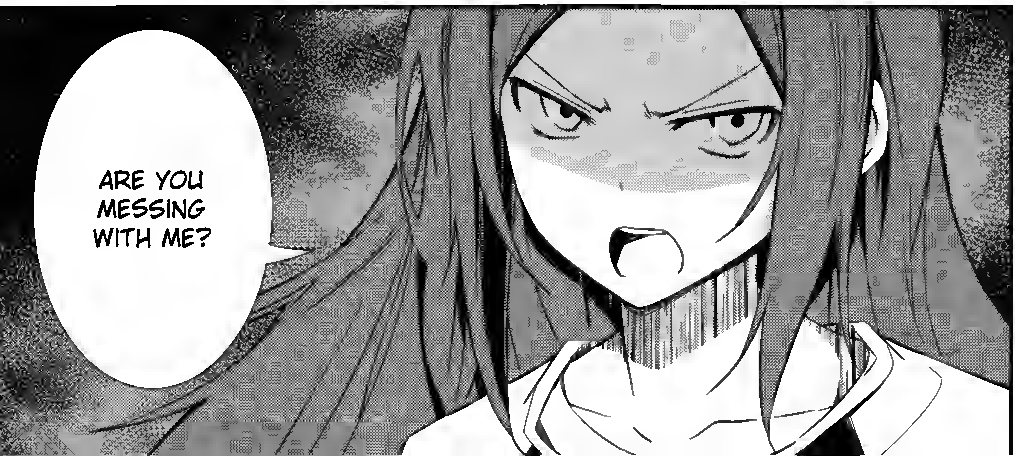
IF ONLY...
THERE WAS SOMETHING THAT COULD TRIGGER IT.

HEY, YUI~
WAIT, NOT YUI.
UH... IT'S ENGI NEE-SAN NOW, RIGHT?
HI, HORIE-SAN.
OH, HI THERE!
HER AND YUI WERE PLANNING ON PRACTICING THEIR INSTRUMENTS TODAY.
FORGIVE ME, BUT I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE THE TRAINING SESSION EARLY THIS TIME

YUMEJI,
I HAVE A SHIFT AT THE CAFÉ, SO I HAVE TO GO, TOO.
OKAY JUST DON'T GO TOO HARD AND HURT YOURSELF
I'LL STAY HERE AND KEEP AT IT FOR A BIT.
24.
25...
I STILL HAVE TO GET STRONGER, NO MATTER WHAT.
.. YEAH.. I KNOW THAT, BUT-
LOOK, BOY
IF THE PROBLEM LIES IN YOUR MEMORY, DOING THIS WILL DO NAUGHT TO AID YOU.

GETTING WHAT YOU WANT JUST BY THINKING ABOUT IT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, EXACTLY?


FOR EXAMPLE,
IMAGINE YOU COULD PLAY ANY SONG IN THE WORLD WITHOUT A MINUTE OF PRACTICE,
OR WIN EVERY MUSICAL CONTEST EVER...
IF THAT WERE AN OPTION TO YOU, WOULD YOU CHOOSE THAT?


ARE YOU MESSING WITH ME?

We want to carry on the feelings of our senpai.
We practice as hard as we do BECAUSE we want to excel!
We all work ourselves to the bone to reach our goals!
If someone were to come to me offering a "life without hardships",
I'd tell them to go stuff it you-know-where!
You're scaring him
Oh S-sorry

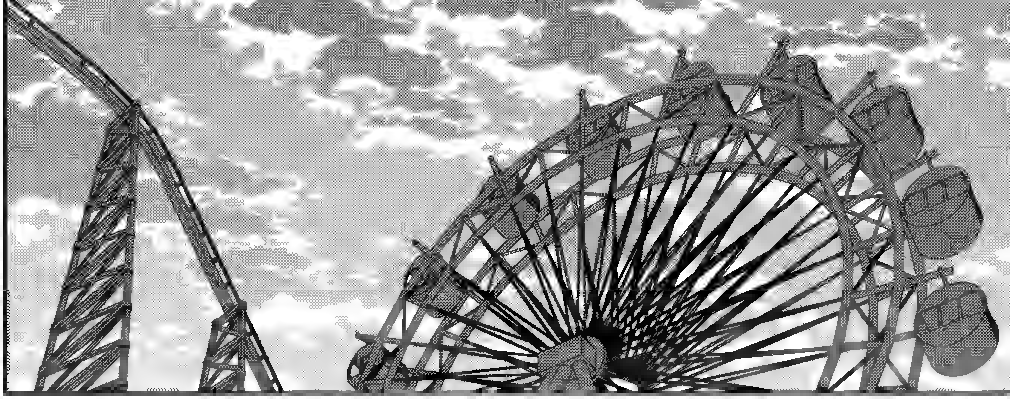
I THINK IT'D BE FUN TO BELT OUT WHATEVER SONG WE WANT WITH EASE,
BUT I PREFER TAKING A SONG WE CAN'T EVEN READ CORRECTLY,
AND LEARNING TO READ IT ONE BAR AT A TIME
PRACTICING IT WITH EVERYONE,
HAVING THE TEACHER NAG US,
AND REPEATING THE PROCESS AGAIN AND AGAIN
BEING ABLE TO PLAY THE SONG IS FUN IN AND OF ITSELF, SURE-
BUT THE TIME IT TAKES TO GET TO THAT POINT IS, TOO

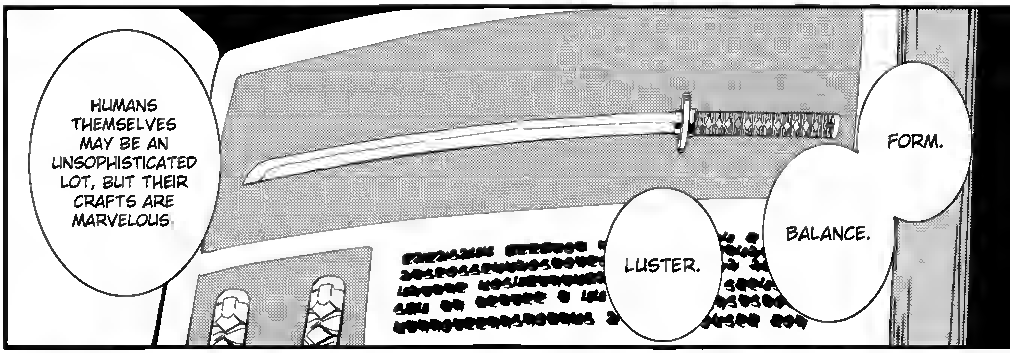
TAKING THAT OFFER MEANS SACRIFICING ONE OF THE FUN PARTS OF LIFE,
AND THAT'S KIND OF SAD TO ME.

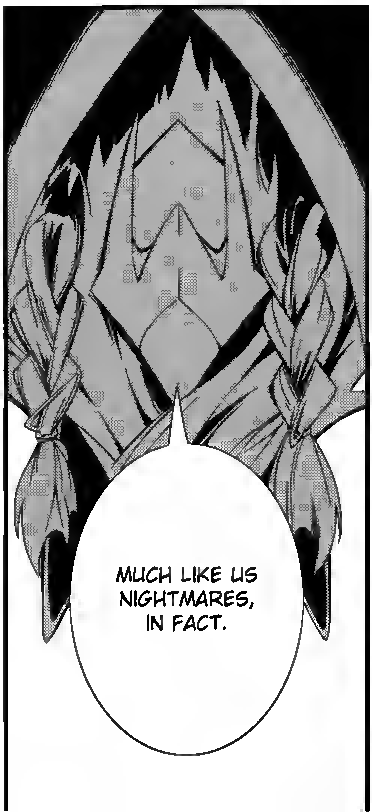
YEAH,
I THINK SO, TOO.

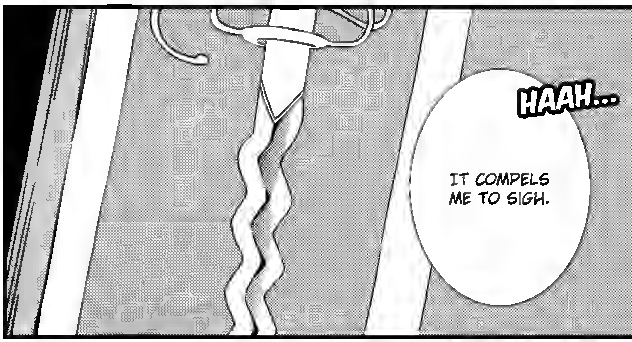
SOUNDS NYICE, BUT...

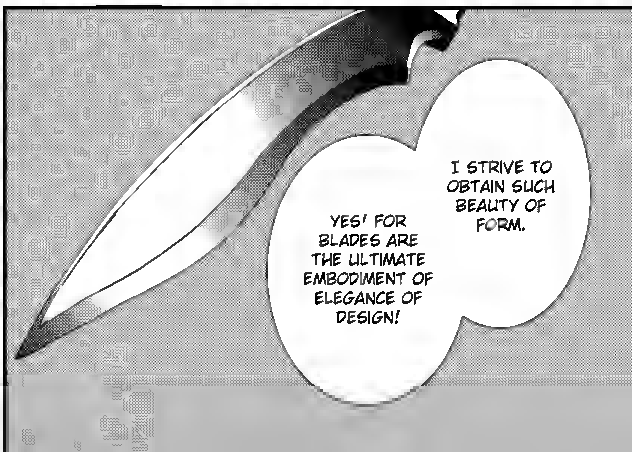
I'LL AGREE THAT ACHIEVING ONE'S DREAM ISN'T SOMETHING OTHERS CAN JUST GRANT YOU
くるくる
I SEE YOUR POINT... AS LONG AS YOU'RE HEARD. PUT YOUR FEELINGS INTO SONG AND EVERYTHING'LL BE OKAY-NYA
BUT...
THERE ARE PLENTY OF HUMANS OUT THERE WHO WOULD HAPPILY TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE THEIR WISHES GRANTED-NYA
YOU HUMANS DO LOVE "FREE" STUFF, DON'T NYA?
SO WHO'S IN THE RIGHT-NYA?




HUMANS THEMSELVES MAY BE AN UNSOPHISTICATED LOT, BUT THEIR CRAFTS ARE MARVELOUS.
LUSTER.
BALANCE.
FORM.


MUCH LIKE US NIGHTMARES, IN FACT.


HAAH...
IT COMPELS ME TO SIGH.


I STRIVE TO OBTAIN SUCH BEAUTY OF FORM.
YES! FOR BLADES ARE THE ULTIMATE EMBODIMENT OF ELEGANCE OF DESIGN!

DON'T YOU AGREE, KYOU-SAMA?
OH, AND COULD YOU TURN THE PAGE FOR ME, PLEASE?

SAY, KYOU-SAMA.
YOU PLAN TO TURN THIS WORLD INTO A REALM OF UN-ENDING BEAUTY FOR US. DO YOU NOT?
OF COURSE, JUISSE.
YOUR OWN DREAM WILL ALSO COME TRUE.

OHOHO.
I'M GROWING SO EAGER TO SEE IT THAT NO NUMBER OF WHETSTONES WILL SATISFY ME.
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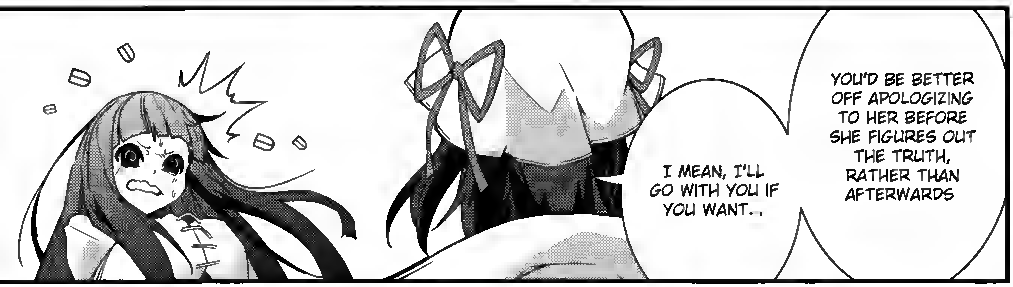
I KEEP TRIPPING OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN!!
I CAN'T STAND HOW HARD IT IS TO WALK IN "REALITY!"

GAH!
ドーン!!
...GATE-KEEPER?!
THE MONSTER GIRL...?!
...I AM A SOLITARY NIGHT-MARE.
BY NATURE, I WALK ALONE
...WEREN'T YOU WITH MINATO?

YOU'RE A BIG MEDDLER, DON'T COME NEAR ME!
...MEANING YOU COULDN'T HANDLE THE THOUGHT OF TALKING TO MINATO, SO YOU RAN OFF AND WOUND UP HERE.


I MEAN, I'LL GO WITH YOU IF YOU WANT..
YOU'D BE BETTER OFF APOLOGIZING TO HER BEFORE SHE FIGURES OUT THE TRUTH, RATHER THAN AFTERWARDS

AND I'LL STUFF YOU IN A KOKESHI MYSELF.
OVERSTEP YOUR BOUNDS,

IT WAS ALL TO TAKE HER BODY AND HEART
AND MAKE THEM MY OWN.
I CURSED MINATO TO NEVER MAKE ANY FRIENDS, TO KEEP HER ALONE.
I TOLD YOU BEFORE–
YOU GOT IN THE WAY OF THAT, THOUGH.
DON'T YOU WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH MINATO NOW?
YOU WERE JUST A TYPICAL NIGHTMARE AT THE TIME
BUT NOW I GET THE FEELING THAT YOU'RE.. DIFFERENT.

LIFE ONLY GETS HARDER WHEN NIGHTMARES AND HUMANS START TO GET ALONG.
WE LIVE IN SEPARATE WORLDS.
NOT TO MENTION..
I HAVE NO CHANCE IN HELL OF BEING FORGIVEN
ESPECIALLY IN CASES LIKE MINE
I'M BETTER OFF DOING NOTHING
IF YOU'D ACTUALLY DONE YOUR JOB AS "GATE-KEEPER"...
I NEVER WOULD HAVE MET MINATO IN THE FIRST PLACE!
AND IF I'M GOING TO FEEL THE WAY I DO NOW, I'D HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF NEVER MAKING FRIENDS AT ALL
I'VE NEVER ONCE CONSIDERED IT LONESOME TO LIVE THAT WAY,
I'M A SOLITARY NIGHTMARE
AS I TRIED TO KEEP MINATO ALL TO MYSELF,
BEFORE I KNEW IT, I'D BECOME UNABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT HER ANY MORE!
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME, ISN'T THERE?

ALL YOUR FAULT!
THIS IS YOUR FAULT!
YOU'RE TO BLAME!

HANG ON, MONSTER GIRL.
CALM DOWN-
IF YOU PULL ME AWAY FROM MINATO NOW, WILL YOU JUST THROW US TOGETHER AGAIN LATER?!
ARE WE A PAIR OF TOY MAGNETS TO YOU?!

DON'T MAKE THAT FACE AT ME!
IF YOU WANT TO RETORT, THEN HERE!
PINCH ME WHEREVER YOU WANT! CHEEK OR WHATEVER, I DON'T CARE!
HEE...
FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, GET A GRIP!!

YOU SAY YOU DON'T NEED FRIENDS...
.....?
HEY, WAIT!!
HEEEE EEEEE EEEEE EEEEE EEK!
I DON'T NEED ANY FRIENDS.
ナイナイナイ!
...HUH?

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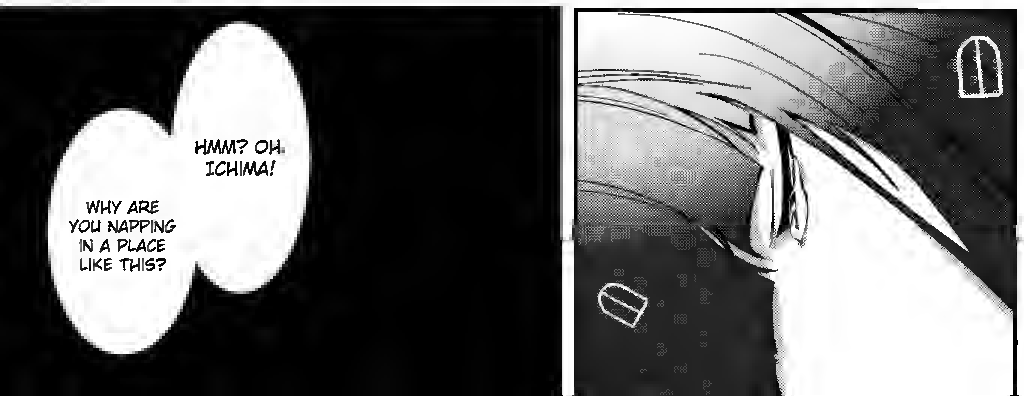
...I WOULDN'T EVEN MIND IF THE GROUND SWALLOWED ME UP RIGHT NOW.


HMM? OH, ICHIMA!
WHY ARE YOU NAPPING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?

ヒタ…
MINATO!
むくり
OH!
SHE'S UP.
LIM,
ICHIMA-CHAN!
IF YOU LIKE, WOULD YOU COME PLAY WITH US?
つづく
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